



MILDRED C. WELLS ACADEMY

SCHOOL HANDBOOK

Soaring to Higher Heights!

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WELCOME!

Dear Mildred C. Wells Academy Family:

We'd like to welcome you to Benton Harbor's newest public school academy, which opened its doors on September 6, 2005. Our school currently serves students in grades Kindergarten through seven and focuses on mastery of core academics along with music, art, and physical education. The academy is named in honor of the late Mildred Casenia Wells, grandmother of Nathaniel Wells, III, who is the president of our board of directors. Mrs. Wells was an advocate of education and human rights.

Mildred C. Wells Academy is constructed on four acres of land. Phase one includes 10 newly constructed classrooms by Innovative Modular Systems. Phase two includes the renovation of 14,000 square feet of the existing storage facility into office space, classrooms, and a multi-purpose room. In addition much of our land has been transformed into a wonderful playground for the students and the community.

Mildred C. Wells Academy is on its way to great things in student achievement and growth. In the 2007-2008 school year, in our first year of counted testing, our students made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) and we have made this great accomplishment every year since! This is a very significant achievement and we are proud of our students. We have teachers in place who are highly qualified and certified in their fields. The academy offers individualized instruction with a focus on mastery of core academic, a dress code, full day kindergarten and free transportation. The academy is chartered by Bay Mills Community College and is managed by The Leona Group, L.L.C. The academy board of directors consists of Nathaniel Wells, III, Ruby Patterson, Janet Crump, Irma Brown and Dana Carmona.

A very important goal for this year is to further develop more opportunities for parent involvement. We have an active Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) which meets monthly to discuss the educational status of the school, ways to make improvements, and fundraising ideas to support special projects. Our doors are always open daily to volunteers. Please look for opportunities in weekly newsletters from teachers and monthly newsletters from the office.

Finally, we thank you, the parents, for allowing your children to be educated here. We will provide quality education for all students along with your help as partners in education. Studies show that a great school has maximum participation from its parents.

Let's have an **AWESOME** year!

Sincerely,

Mrs. Renene Price, MA
School Leader

ABSENCES TARDINESS AND EARLY RELEASE OF STUDENTS

1. The school office should be called **before 8:30 a.m.** to report a morning or all day absence.
2. If a student will be absent for any reason, please contact the school.
3. Parents should notify the school and sign in students if they arrive after 8:50 a.m. Students not in class by this time will be marked tardy. If the bus is late, students will not be marked tardy.
4. During school hours, no student may leave the school grounds without permission. Parents **MUST** check into the office when picking up their child for an early dismissal. The following guidelines shall apply:
 - a. No child will be permitted to walk home without parental permission, in writing.
 - b. The person to whom the child is released will be required to sign a log sheet in the school office indicating the time and purpose of release. Identification will be required if the person is not on the emergency list and the student will not be released without parental permission.
5. Please note that excessive absences may result in a student having lower grades and not being promoted to the next grade level. If students fall below an 80% attendance rate, **a truancy officer will be notified.**

BUS RULES AND DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

The bus service provided by Mildred C. Wells Academy is a privilege, not a right. All bus riders are expected to behave appropriately so as not to cause a dangerous situation for the driver and other riders. The safety of the driver and the riders must come first and unacceptable behavior of any riders will not be tolerated. Any bus rider whose behavior is unmanageable and who causes or participates in a disturbance may have the privilege of the bus service revoked for a period of time or indefinitely. Bus riders must comply with the following rules at all times:

- a. Obey the bus driver and show respect to the driver and other riders.
- b. Refrain from excessive noise, physical or verbal assault, or other unacceptable, offensive or dangerous behavior.
- c. Remain seated except for entering and exiting the bus.

KINDERGARTEN BUS GUIDELINES

1. **Parents must be at the bus stop to receive his/her child.**
2. Students MUST be clearly at their stop at least **5 minutes** prior to the scheduled pick-up time.
3. Bus drivers will NOT blow the horn to signal their arrival.
4. **Bus drivers will NOT wait for students. If a student is not visible when the bus driver arrives, the driver will assume that the student is not attending school that day and will proceed on. It is very important that an adult receives a child off the bus and gives the driver a wave to proceed on.**

CARE OF PROPERTY

If a student does damage to or loses school property, the student or his/her parents may be required to pay for the replacement or damage. If the damage or loss was intentional, the student will also be subject to discipline according to the school discipline code. Mildred C. Wells Academy staff members reserve the right to search and seize any stolen or illegal objects.

CHILD ABUSE

State law requires school personnel only to report, not investigate, suspected abuse or neglect to the appropriate law enforcement agency. Failing to do so is a Class B Misdemeanor.

COMMUNICATION

If you wish to speak with a teacher during non-classroom time, please call and make an appointment. Teachers will be glad to return your call at their earliest convenience. Otherwise, teachers are generally available between 8:00 a.m. and 8:25 a.m. and between 3:45 p.m. and 4:00 p.m.

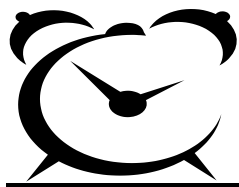
Visitors are welcome, but required to sign in at the office upon arrival at the school. The visitors are not to interfere with classroom instruction or routine.

Mildred C. Wells Academy will communicate by weekly classroom newsletters, monthly office newsletters and calendar of events, monthly menus, and announcements.

CURRICULUM

The following curriculum is used at Mildred C. Wells Academy:

- KENT COUNTY CORE CURRICULUM
- HARCOURT READING, MATH, SCIENCE, SOCIAL STUDIES
- MICHIGAN CORE FRAMEWORKS CURRICULUM
- MICHIGAN MODEL FOR HEALTH EDUCATION
- EXEMPLARY PHYSICAL EDUCATION CURRICULUM



DAILY SCHEDULE

8:25 a.m. – 8:50 a.m.	Breakfast and Morning Announcements
8:50 a.m. – 3:40 p.m.	Instructional Time
3:40 p.m.	Dismissal

NO STUDENTS ALLOWED PRIOR TO 8:15 A.M.

DISCIPLINE CODE

Any or all of the disciplinary responses below may be used for the noted violation of the student code of conduct.

Violation of Student Code of Conduct	Consequences
Excessive talking in class or school activity	1-10
Insubordination	1-12
Classroom disruptions	1-12
Leaving classroom without permission	1-13
Leaving school building without permission	8-14
Use of profanity or vulgarity	1-12
Bullying, intimidation or verbal harassment	1-14
Cheating or Plagiarism	1-11
Inappropriate displays of affection	6-14
Sexual harassment	10-14
Fighting, play fighting or assault of others	1-14
Vandalism or theft	1-14
False Fire Alarm	6-14
Bomb threat	12-14
Threats towards or assault of Faculty or Staff	7-14
Possession of real/imitation controlled substances	11-14
Possession of real/imitation weapons or explosives	11-14

CONSEQUENCES

1. Loss of privileges
2. No credit for assignments
3. Mediation by staff
4. Restitution
5. Special assignment
6. Parent contact
7. Behavior contract
8. Detention
9. Written communication (referrals, etc.)
10. Parent conference
11. In-school suspension
12. Comprehensive meeting with parents
13. Suspension
14. Expulsion

DRESS CODE

By selecting Mildred C. Wells Academy, you are agreeing to comply with and support the dress code.

TOPS: Solid blue, white, or yellow polo shirts (no stripes), sweaters, sweat-shirts

BOTTOMS: Navy or khaki pants, shorts, skirts
NO JEANS!

SHOES: No open toes shoes or sandals are allowed. Students should wear comfortable every day shoes or tennis shoes.

OUTDOOR CLOTHING: During the winter months, please equip your child with proper outdoor attire, including hats, gloves, scarves, and boots. Students will still have recess in the winter as long as the temperature is not below 32 degrees.

OTHER ITEMS:

- ◆ No hats or wave caps may be worn inside the building
- ◆ Outdoor coats and jackets and boots may not be worn during class
- ◆ No crop tops with bare midriffs showing
- ◆ No low-riding pants with exposed underwear
- ◆ No sagging
- ◆ No clothing or hats that advertise inappropriate products or subject matter.
- ◆ No open-toe shoes, i.e. flip-flops

ENFORCEMENT: If a student does not comply with the dress code, they will be:

- ✓ Given a verbal warning
- ✓ Sent to the office
- ✓ Given a discipline sheet to take home
- ✓ Given a phone call home
- ✓ Deprived of privileges

EMERGENCY CARDS

State law requires that all students must have an emergency medical card completed, signed by a parent/guardian, and filed with the school office. A student may be excluded from school until this requirement has been fulfilled.

Students with specific health care needs should submit those needs in writing to the school office with the proper documentation by a physician. All medications are to be delivered to the office by an adult. The office manager is available to discuss the procedure for medications and treatments.

EMERGENCY CLOSINGS AND DELAYS

If the school must be delayed or closed due to inclement weather or other conditions, the school will notify the following radio and television stations and internet:

WSBT AM 960; Oldies 94.3 FM
WVBH 105.3 FM
WNDU-NBC Channel 16
WSBT-ABC NEWS22
www.wsbt.com

FIRE, TORNADO, & LOCKDOWN DRILLS

The school complies with all fire safety laws and will conduct fire, tornado, lockdown drills in accordance with state law.

GENERAL SCHOOL RULES

1. Students are expected to be in their classrooms on time and with all necessary supplies. Students are not allowed in the classrooms without permission from a teacher or the school leader.
2. Students are expected to complete homework following the school and the teacher's guidelines.
3. Students are expected to follow playground and lunch rules.
4. Students are subject to the authority of all teachers, staff, supervising parents, and other adults during school, field trips, on the playground, etc.
5. Children are never permitted to leave the school property during school hours to go to the store, home or any destination without permission from the school office. Students being picked up by a parent or guardian during the school day must be picked up at the school office and signed out by an adult.
6. Students may not bring computer games, CD's, disks, radios, cell phones, or any other electronic devices. They will be taken away and stored until an adult picks them up.
7. Parents or guardians will be responsible for all damage done by children to school property (marking on desks, destruction and loss of books and materials, improper restroom behavior). This will involve either the cleaning up or monetary payment for the article or damaged property.
8. Throwing stones, sticks, woodchips or snowballs is in violation of school rules.
9. Copying or cheating is prohibited.
10. Students should remove hats once inside the building.
11. Students are to be in uniform every day unless otherwise told.
12. Excessive jewelry is not to worn to school to prevent possible theft and distraction. The school leader will determine what is defined as "excessive."

HOMEWORK

Homework assignments can be expected on a daily basis. Completion of these assignments will be reflected in the students' grades.

INCLUSION

The academy identifies, locates and evaluates all children in the school who may have disabilities. For more information regarding assistance for students with disabilities or if you suspect a child may have a disability, please contact the school leader. Our academy embraces the philosophy of full inclusion, believing special education students can best be educated in the regular classroom. Our teachers accept responsibility for all students in their classroom and modify, accommodate and adjust teaching techniques and class activities to meet the learning abilities of all children. Special education staff supports the regular classroom with this process.

INTERNET ACCESS

The school provides staff and students with Internet access as a tool to enhance learning. This access is a privilege and not a right. Students with permission to use the Internet will be supervised by school staff. However, students are responsible for good behavior, with the same general rules applied as outlined in the behavior code. Parents share in this responsibility. A copy of the Internet access policy is in the application packet.

LOST AND FOUND

The lost and found area is in the office. Unclaimed items will be donated to charity at the end of the school year.

MEALS/FOOD SERVICE

The cost of a full breakfast is \$1.00 per day and lunch is \$2.00 per day. The "reduced" cost of breakfast is \$.30 and the "reduced" cost of lunch is \$.40. If you believe that your family would be qualify for a "free" or "reduced" breakfast and lunch, please contact the office for an eligibility application.

PEST MANAGEMENT

The school is committed to providing students and staff with a safe environment. The academy incorporates state Integrated Pest Management procedures for the control of pests. A schedule of pest treatment application, which may include written notification prior to any application, is provided to parents and staff according to state regulations.

PLAYGROUND RULES

The playground rules are to be followed by all students. If we respect each other, and ourselves everyone will enjoy recess and have a safe playground on which to play.

- Pushing, shoving, tripping, or “play fighting” is not allowed anywhere at this academy.
- Throwing stones, woodchips, sticks, snowballs, or other items which may cause injury, is not allowed.
- Students are not to leave the playground at any time without permission from the staff on duty.
- Bathrooms are to be used before or after recess.
- Students must stay in the designated area.

RELIGION

Under Michigan law, schools are required to release students for religious instruction if the students and parents request such release. Students excused for religious instruction will be listed in advance for teachers and are not to be either marked tardy or absent during the time missed from school classes. Mildred C. Wells Academy does not teach religious education. However, the academy does support students using their faith as a learning tool.

REPORT CARDS

Report cards are issued approximately every 10 weeks. In between each marking period, teachers will send home progress reports to parents. Parents are invited to request a conference appointment at anytime during the year when they are interested in more information on their child’s progress.

STUDENT RECORDS

The school keeps students’ permanent records. The parent/guardian and student, if 18 or older, have the right to see the student’s record and to have it explained. Administrators, secretaries, counselors and teachers responsible for supervising, instructing or helping a student have access to that student’s records.

STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The rules and procedures of the school are designed to allow each student to obtain a safe, orderly and appropriate education. Students will be expected to follow teacher directions and obey all school rules. The staff expects the students to arrive at school prepared to learn. Students can expect their rights to freedom of expression, association and to fair treatment as long as they respect those rights for their fellow students and staff.

STUDENT VALUABLES

Students are responsible for the care of their own personal property. The school cannot be responsible for the safe-keeping of and will not be liable for lost, damaged, or stolen personal valuables. Jewelry, expensive clothing, electronic equipment and other irreplaceable items should not be brought to school. The school may confiscate these types of items and the students' parents are responsible for retrieving the items.

TELEPHONE USAGE

Office telephones are not to be used for personal calls. Except in cases of an emergency, students will not be allowed to make or receive calls from the office.

TOBACCO/SUBSTANCE USE OR POSSESSION POLICY

Mildred C. Wells Academy adheres to the policies of safe, drug-free schools and communities, which advocates a zero tolerance policy. Any possession, use, or distribution or transfer of these substances would result in a recommendation for suspension or automatic expulsion. Local authorities may also be notified.

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

A. **Additional Assistance**

If after speaking with your child's teacher you would like further assistance in the case of a particular student, please contact administrators in this order: School Leader; the School Leader's regional vice-president/supervisor.

B. **Equal Opportunity**

This academy supports the principle that all persons are entitled to equal Education and employment opportunities without regard to race, religion, color, gender, age, disability, limited English proficiency or national origin. The Title IX compliance and 504 compliance officer is Angela Pogoncheff. She can be reached by calling the main office.

C. **Rights of homeless children and youth**

According to the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, children who are homeless have the right to attend school, to have access to comparable services and to be treated with respect. Assistance for families in homeless situations is available from the school office/homeless liaison and by calling the National Center for Homeless Education, 1.800.308.2145.

D. **Staff training in blood-borne pathogens**

The staff receives yearly training, as required by state law, in dealing with incidents that involve blood. Guidelines have been developed regarding safe custodial procedures.

E. **Enrollment process**

The academy, as a free public school, follows all requirements outlined by its charter authorizer and federal and state laws relating to applications and enrollments. In late winter, current re-enroll, with preference given to them and their siblings. During the spring's advertised open enrollment period, any local and/or state resident may apply. If a grade is oversubscribed, a public lottery takes place to determine enrollment and a waiting list. **Current students who do not re-enroll during the publicized re-enrollment period could lose their space for the next year.**

In order to register/enroll into Mildred C. Wells Academy, the following documents must be provided: **Birth certificate, current immunization record, Social Security Card and an application.** The application can be obtained by calling or visiting the school's office.

MCWA Staff Roster 2009-2010

NAME	JOB TITLE
Renene Price	School Leader
Claire Martin	Kindergarten Teacher
Joann Ripley	Grade 1 Teacher
Rebecca Atherton	Grade 2 Teacher
Twonia Horne	Grade 3 Teacher
Jackie Wheeler	Grade 4 Teacher
Rita Kujawa	Grade 5 Teacher
Robin Tuka	Grade 6 Teacher
Sheila Ford	Grade 7 Teacher
Donna Munchow	Title I Teacher
Sara Petersen	Title I Teacher
Bryanne Masterson	Title I Teacher
Rachel Fearnow	Title I Teacher
Erica Nichols	Lead Paraprofessional
Brandon Chase	Paraprofessional
Tameisha Lewis	Paraprofessional
Rona Randle	Paraprofessional
Jacoy Wesby	Paraprofessional
Ellen Dickerson	Paraprofessional
Lyn Baker	Paraprofessional
Pamela Buford	Paraprofessional
Angela McCray	LRE Aide
Latasha Heggler	LRE Aide
Tina Smigiel	Social Worker
Inez Reyes	Site Mentor Manager
Anna Ward	Resource Teacher
Kristin Crumley	Instructional Coach/Reading Specialist
Timothy Nichols	Maintenance Director
Beverly Milton	Office Manager/Trans. Supervisor
Vaughn Clement	Lead Bus Driver
Percy Harrison	Bus Driver
Michael Parker	Bus Driver
Cherita Bynum	Bus Driver
Willa Coleman	Bus Driver
Lettia Nichols	Bus Aide
Tamika Perry	Bus Aide
Ella White	Bus Aide
Vacant	Speech Therapist

